

DILIGENCE SHORE TIES



Edition 06-02
July 2006

*Summer in
The Straits of Florida*

DC OLYMPICS: 24MAY06

BM1 Holmes and 3/c Cadet Kelly man → the charged hose and use the different settings on the Vari-Nozzle while ET2 Leonard observes.



LT Konczynski and EMC Alexander teach → how to set-up, start, and use a P-100 and P-1 Pump. The P-100 pump is used to dewater and fight fires, and the P-1 pump is for emergency dewatering of sinking boats.



← Assistance is provided to newly reported members dressing out in the Firefighting ensemble, which includes: firefighting coveralls, anti-flash hood, firefighting helmet, firefighting gloves, firefighting boots, and oxygen breathing apparatus.



← LTJg Lied teaches ENS Fitzpatrick, DC2 Hunt, SN Custis, SK1 Grey, 1/c Cadet Presnell, and the rest of their team about shoring, which reinforces strained or damages structures.



← MK3 Timmerman hard at work trying to "save" BM2 Strosnider during the first aid part of DC Olympics. (Don't worry they were able to revive him.)

HOLIDAY ROUTINE



SN Ensley, Rescue Swimmer, is the 1st → person in during a swim call.



Anyone for a swim? HS2 Garcia, FN → MacClugage, FS3 Mazzuca, BM2 Williams, IT1 Gagnon, EM2 Braun, EM3 Myers, and ET2 Leonard were ready.



SN Custis, SN Sikole, FN Hayes, and FN → Van Camp enjoy a friendly game of poker.

← Relaxing in the sun while working out and fishing.



← FS2 Hunter caught a blue fin tuna.



← Finally, 84° waters near the Florida Keys.



DRILLS



DC2 Hunt and MK3 Graco are part of the → attack team for a Damage Control drill.



SN Wilson and SN Storino practice their → knot tying skills.



← SN Mitchell and OS2 Moore are taking a break from investigating spaces during a DC drill to have training with FS1 Lester.



← LT Konczynski and MK2 Rich check on the recently rebuilt #1 Main Diesel Engine during speed trials for the Diesel Engine Maintenance Program (DEMPs).



← DILIGENCE tows and practices astern refueling on our small boat, an annual training requirement.

OPERATIONS



357 MIGRANTS ON DECK DURING THE PATROL

On May 21st, 2006, U.S. Coast Guard Cutter DILIGENCE departed Wilmington, NC destined for the Straits of Florida to patrol for illegal migrants. This patrol coincided with transfer season, which lead to many goodbyes and welcomes during the patrol. Thus, training was continuously being conducted to get the new crewmembers up to speed. During the transit south, the Damage Control Training Teams conducted DC Olympics. The DC Olympics consisted of 4 training stations: firefighting ensemble and hose handling, dewatering pumps, shoring, and first aid. It was a good time for the newly reported crewmembers to learn damage control while refreshing the minds of the rest of the crew.

Shortly after arrival into the op area, a “chug-chug” (a small, homemade boat) was spotted with 13 Cuban migrants onboard. The Cuban migrants were safely transferred onto DILIGENCE via small boat, and their vessel was destroyed at sea as a hazard to navigation. Within the first week, 48 migrants had crossed DILIGENCE’s decks, found at sea by DILIGENCE or by other law enforcement boats patrolling the area. After the first week underway, DILIGENCE went to Miami to relax and enjoy the first of 3 port calls.

Upon leaving Miami, DILIGENCE conducted flight ops. Flight Ops helped train both the ship’s crew and the helo pilots. A few days later, back in the Straits

of Florida, DILIGENCE had 143 migrants on her decks at the same time. This is the most migrants that DILIGENCE has had on deck at one time in several years. On the night of 01 June, a distraught migrant jumped overboard, and the ship worked together to successfully find and recover the man from the water. On the evening of 04 June, DILIGENCE located a “chug” more than 40 miles off shore. The “chug” contained 18 Cuban migrants that were transferred to DILIGENCE for processing and their vessel was sunk as a hazard to navigation.

DILIGENCE worked closely with multiple Coast Guard patrol boats and the Customs Border Patrol. We vectored in a patrol boat on two separate occasions to assist in the interception of two “go-fasts,” and DILIGENCE worked with Customs Border Patrol to interdict a “chug” containing 8 more Cuban migrants.

Every two weeks, the crew got a break with two other port calls in Key West and St. Petersburg, FL. In St. Petersburg, the crew took advantage of the military discount at Busch Gardens. In addition to port calls, DILIGENCE anchored at Ft. Jefferson in Dry Tortugas, and most of the crew enjoyed a beautiful day of snorkeling and BBQ on the beach. Our Boarding Team even had to spring into action when migrants were found on an adjacent island and brought over to be processed at Ft. Jefferson.

In the midst of conducting all the migrant operations, the crew has been extremely busy preparing for two big inspections scheduled during the next inport, Command Assessment of Readiness and Training (CART) and Aviation Certification. Multiple drills were conducted and checklists reviewed to prepare for each of the inspections. Finally we advanced five members of the crew. IT1 Gagnon, FS2 Perez, OS2 Saltz, EM2 Braun, and BM3 Keil were promoted to the next rank. Congratulations!

The crew observes the destruction of an →
unsafe migrant vessel.



← BM3 Uscanga hands out a coloring book to migrant children.

MIGRANT OPERATIONS

3/c Cadet Higbie assists a migrant with → removing his life jacket.



← SN Sikole and SN Horoszewski assist a migrant coming onboard DILIGENCE.

HS2 Garcia interviews the migrants to → ensure they don't have any medical conditions. Frequently, the migrants are dehydrated and have cuts that need to be tended to.



← OS3 Mobley frisks a migrant to ensure there are no weapons or contraband.

While the migrants are being frisked and → medically screened, ENS Hoy ensures that their property is properly labeled and accounted for.



FS3 Mazzuca puts rice and beans in →
bowls to be distributed to the migrants.



← A Boarding Team consisting of BM2 Strosnider, BM1 Holmes, BM3 Keil, and IT1 Gagnon after boarding a “chug”.

The Boarding Team comes along side a →
“chug” to transport the migrants to
DILIGENCE.



← FS2 Perez helps a young migrant tie his
shoes prior to being transported off.

A group of migrants being transported to →
a patrol boat via our small boat to be
repatriated in Cuba.



FLIGHT/GUNNERY OPERATIONS

SN Mitchell, SN Butler, and SN Hauhe → wait for the signal to move away from the helo after applying the tie down straps.



← BM1 Holmes, SN Moder, and SN Horoszewski attach the tie down straps to the helo.

The fueling team handles the fueling → hose as the helo conducts an in-flight refuel (HIFR).



← FN Hayes and DC2 Hunt extract a pilot from the helo during a crash on deck drill.

BM1 Holmes, GM2 Harris, and SN Butler → shoot the target on the 25mm MK38 gun.



← Mount 53 shooting the target on the .50 cal machine gun.

FROM THE BRIDGE WING

Dear Friends and Families of DILIGENCE,



As DILIGENCE enters the last few days of a 48 day patrol, the crew and I reflect on why we joined the U.S. Coast Guard. We joined in large part due to the humanitarian nature of Coast Guard work. The humanitarian aspects of the Coast Guard dominated this patrol, as we saved/assisted and cared for 384 illegal Cuban migrants who attempted to enter Southern Florida on myriad vessel types ranging from homemade of wood, barrels, and foam, to sophisticated speedboats run by hired smugglers. The experience was emotionally moving, day after day, to see people of every

age willing to give up everything in their homeland to risk their lives trying to enter a place that could offer them opportunity and prosperity... the United States.

This patrol reminded all of us of how lucky we are... Lucky to have the freedom and opportunity to pursue bigger and better things in life, whether that is advancement in the CG, an education, a new car, house, etc. The hundreds of migrants we picked up do not have those opportunities in Cuba since the State owns everything and poverty abounds. Most of our migrants were sent back to Cuba and a small percentage went to the U.S. Naval Base, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba for further screening to determine if they have fear of persecution upon return to their country. The migrants who have genuine claim for political asylum are most often resettled to third countries, such as in South and Central America.

I was amazed and impressed at the hard work put in by the Crew day in and day out to safely transfer the migrants on and off DILIGENCE, to maintain 24/7 security over them, feed them, provide medical screening/care and sanitary facilities for them. BM3 Uscanga even played the guitar for a group of about 80 migrants, and they responded with joy and frequent applause as they sang along with him.

On top of around-the-clock migrant operations, the Crew managed to professionally and enthusiastically conduct 56 drills, 68 helicopter landings/evolutions, and 8 law enforcement boardings. Further, they prepared extensive checklists (many hundreds of line item requirements) for our upcoming big inspection – The Command Assessment of Readiness and Training (CART). Just take a look at our patrol statistics on the next page and you'll see that I've only touched on a few of our accomplishments. Also, we added two more new port calls to our list of diverse and interesting places to visit – Miami and St Petersburg, FL.

While in St. Petersburg, FL, I was able to visit the USCGC BLACKTHORN memorial. The BLACKTHORN was a 180ft CG buoy tender that collided with the merchant vessel CAPRICORN just outside the Sunshine Skyway Bridge, Tampa Bay in January 1980. The CAPRICORN's anchor tore through BLACKTHORN's port side, and, as CAPRICORN backed away, the anchor chain payed out and, when taut, pulled

BLACKTHORN over, dragging the cutter on its side until it flooded and sank. The mishap resulted in the tragic deaths of 24 of the 50 member BLACKTHORNE crew. New laws, regulations, and policies were passed from lessons learned in the marine casualty investigation, such as vessel bridge-to-bridge radiotelephone requirements and navigation refresher courses for new Commanding Officer's. Visiting the memorial (see picture below) was a moving experience for me and a reminder of the awesome responsibility I have in keeping DILIGENCE and the Crew safe while out at sea. I can assure you, the Crew's safety is my top priority, and I am honored to be trusted with it.

After one year as Commanding Officer, the experience has been more fulfilling, exciting, and adventurous than I had ever imagined. Our accomplishments on DILIGENCE have far exceeded my already high expectations. The pictures and patrol statistics speak for themselves, and I thank and praise each and every crewmember for their professionalism, enthusiasm, and untiring work ethic. Finally, we thank all of you for your support, and we look forward to seeing you at home in a few days!

My Respects,
CDR Tony Gentilella

P.S. – IT1 Gagnon and FS1 Lester put together an amazing DVD of DILIGENCE and the Crew that encompasses all we've accomplished from January-July 2006, including our patrols, dockside maintenance, and morale events. The DVD was a big hit with the Crew, and we are going to distribute copies for your viewing pleasure.



The USCGC BLACKTHORNE Memorial, St. Petersburg, Florida.

PATROL STATISTICS

**984 UNDERWAY HOURS
4050 MILES STEAMED
783 MILLION MAIN DIESEL ENGINE PISTON
STROKES
13.6 MILLION SHAFT REVOLUTIONS
2650 WATCHES STOOD
10, 600 HOURS OF WATCH STOOD
48 MAJOR QUALIFICATIONS COMPLETED
\$45,000 SPENT ON FOOD
192 MEALS SERVED
12,900 PLATES OF FOOD SERVED
4 ANCHORINGS
36 SMALL BOAT EVOLUTIONS
10 MOORING EVOLUTIONS
56 DRILLS
68 HELO EVOLUTIONS - 3 PILOTS, 1 LSO,
2 TIEDOWNS QUALIFIED
8 LAW ENFORCEMENT BOARDINGS
1 JOINT GO FAST INTERDICTION
3 CHUG-CHUG INTERDICTIONS / 39 MIGRANTS
INTERDICTED
384 MIGRANTS PROCESSED
07 MIGRANT SMUGGLERS PROCESSED
01 SAR CASE / MOB
01 LIFE DIRECTLY SAVED**

GREAT JOB EVERYBODY!



We'll be home soon!

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Photographers- CDR Gentilella, ENS Baker, ENS Laubenheimer, ET1 Gemborys, ET2 Sears, FS2 Perez, and PA3 Miller

**Questions or comments? Please email
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any suggestions!**